

and want of motion in the lower extremity. In these cases it will be found that the erosion of the bodies of the vertebrae has extended to the points at which the nerves pass out from the spinal canal, and further when there is pain of intensity in degree extending down from the seat of disease in the back to the groin and along the spine; this is an indication of infiltration of the tissues behind the peritoneum, and into the psoas muscle with blood.

"With reference to pain, we may, then, as a general rule, couple the amount of pain in the back, and elsewhere, with the progress of the aneurism upon the bony and nervous structures of the spine, though it is by no means necessary that the bodies of the vertebrae shall be eroded.

"For symptoms connected with the extremities we shall, in the arm, find varieties in the circulation and pulse at the wrist. It may differ as to volume or force; it may intermit where the heart is affected, or be altogether wanting. It may be absent at the wrist, in one case, from pressure upon the subclavian artery at its origin; and in another, from the cylinder of the artery being plugged by a portion of fibrin extending into it from the cavity of the aneurism. Where the artery at its origin is imbedded in the sac, this pedicle will sometimes completely fill the artery, passing into it for several inches. This implication of the trunks given off from the aorta necessarily influences the circulation through the branches below, and an absence of pulsation in the right radial artery of the wrist may lead us to infer that the innominata artery is more or less pressed upon and engaged.

"Aneurism of the aorta, however, at or near its origin, may exist to a considerable extent without implicating the pulse at the wrist, which may be good and equal at either side, when the ascending portion of the aorta, between the heart and the origin of the vessel given off from the arch, is affected.

"In the lower extremities there will occasionally be absence of pulsation in the femoral and its branches, whilst pain, of sciatic character, will shoot through the limbs, occasioned by the pressure of the aneurism upon the origin of the spinal nerves; these, when present, assist in pointing out the true nature of the affection. Numbness of the fingers and toes, too (especially when exposed to cold), are further indications of the disease. Indeed, a general coldness of the whole body is also not an unfrequent attendant, arising as if from an interference with nervous influence, and the generation of animal heat."

These few pages altogether make up a publication of rare usefulness; and if the knowledge imparted therein be made the guide to practice, the author can well indulge the hope that it may be the means of saving many a valuable life.

W. F. A.

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ART. XXV.—*A Monograph on Glycerin and its Uses.* By HENRY HARTSHORNE, A. M., M. D., &c. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1865. 12mo. pp. 68.

THE subject of glycerin and its chemical nature and capabilities, with its medicinal uses, is exceedingly interesting. Although referred to in the treatises upon the *materia medica*, and adopted as an officinal preparation by the United States *Pharmacopœia*, we needed just the *brochure* presented by the author above mentioned to place it permanently before the public, and we are much indebted to him for publishing his exhaustive researches with regard to its history. In presenting a short bibliographical notice, we are aided by the lucid divisions which Dr. Hartshorne has adopted in discussing his theories; and first, with reference to its discovery.

Glycerin appears to have been discovered by Scheele, about the year 1779, in the residuum from the manufacture of lead plaster. It was more fully investigated, in 1811, by Chevreul and Pelouse. Gay Lussac and Chevreul patented a process for separating the fatty acids in 1825; but, as remarked by the author, glycerin was hardly known in commerce, in its pure state, until the beautiful discovery and invention of our townsman, Mr. Richard Albert Tilghman, patented

in 1854. The first mode of obtaining it was by saponification, and this is the Pharmacopœia process. Mr. Tilghman's process is by the action of high steam on water under pressure. The nature of fats, as analogous to saline bodies, was recognized and established by Chevreul, in which glycerin was determined to act the part of a base, and hence the *rationale* of the processes adopted for its elimination.

The properties of the substance are well described, and, as a matter of practical importance, the quality is stated of being converted into *acrolein*, when distilled without water. This acrid, irritating product is a nuisance to the neighbourhood of soap and candle works, and has called forth loud complaints of unhealthfulness. It is described as very irritating to the "eyes, nostrils, and lungs, and having a strongly disagreeable odour like that of the wick of a candle just blown out." The tests for the purity of glycerin are minutely detailed.

One of the most important points connected with the article is the property of dissolving bodies. A full exposition of the capabilities in this way is given, with the table of Cap and Garot. The therapeutical chapter presents a full summary of the application of this preparation in the treatment of disease, which will amply repay the reader. The last chapters, including the pharmaceutical use and application to the arts, contain information which may be read with profit, affording suggestions which may be taken advantage of either in dispensing medicines or in artistic operations. We commend this little book to the profession, with the impression that, restricted as it is, it is a valuable addition to its literature. The typographical execution and ornate style of publication are extremely creditable to the publisher.

J. C.

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ART. XXVI.—*The Book of Prescriptions, containing 3000 Prescriptions, collected from the Practice of the most eminent Physicians and Surgeons, English, French, and American. Comprising, also, a compendious History of the Materia Medica, Lists of the Doses of all Officinal or Established Preparations, and an Index of Diseases and Remedies.* By HENRY BEASLEY, author of "The Druggists' Receipt Book," and "The Medical Formulary." 8vo. pp. 562. Lindsay & Blakiston. Philadelphia, 1865.

THE well-instructed and observant practitioner will find but few occasions when it will be necessary for him to consult a book of prescriptions like that of Mr. Beasley, while by the half educated and indolent such a book, we fear, will be too generally adopted as his sole guide in the administration of remedial agents. We admit that there are medical formulæ, sanctioned by the matured experience of physicians of the highest professional repute, which deserve to be remembered, being especially adapted to particular circumstances or to certain stages of disease, or to facilitate the exhibition of some remedy of a particularly offensive or nauseous flavour. Of such formulae the author of the volume before us presents a number, culled from the works of medical writers of unquestionable authority. Many of them are distinguished by their neatness and elegance, while others are valuable from their peculiar adaptedness to fulfil important indications when properly and opportunely administered.

It is not, however, by having at hand the most approved prescriptions of "the most eminent physicians and surgeons, English, French, and American," that will render these prescriptions available in the treatment of disease. To do so they must be carefully considered with respect to their true place in the special therapeutics of the particular disease to which they are respectively adapted, so that a correct idea may be acquired of the end to be obtained by their employment, and the exact conditions under which they are to be given.

We may remark, in conclusion, that although the fact is very prominently stated, that in the collection of prescriptions before us, those of the most eminent American physicians and surgeons are included, yet upon an examination of its pages it will be found that but very few of the favourite formulæ of the practitioners of the United States are to be met with.

D. F. C.